

PSYCHE.

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FALSE DATES.

So far as our examination has gone, we have not learned that it was the custom of any scientific periodical to publish the actual date of its issue in a systematic manner, before such a practice was adopted in PSYCHE. Whether PSYCHE was or was not a pioneer in this direction is of little importance compared with the importance of the principle thus illustrated. We are pleased to notice the adoption of this practice in one and another of our contemporaries. PSYCHE has practised it from the outset.

With the concluding numero of its last finished volume (December 1882), the *Canadian entomologist* began to print, on the numero, the date of printing of each numero of its issue. How much better it would be to announce, in one numero, the date of actual issue of the preceding! Accidents frequently occur, after a signature, or a numero, is partly or even wholly printed, to delay its issue beyond the expected date, and the signatures cannot be, in that case, thrown away, or their date changed, without loss or trouble which will rarely be incurred. No reliance, in most cases, therefore can be placed on such an announcement. As an announcement of date of printing and not of date of issue, it has no value in a question of priority. The announcement,

if intended as a statement of the date of issue, is positively false, in that it is made in advance of issue; however strictly the fact may be made subsequently to coincide with the announcement. In case, however, the announcement is made after the event, it has a positive value.

It is rarely the case that so excellent an opportunity of illustrating the evils of the practice of putting the date on the signature to which it refers is given, as in the statements of dates of issue which are appended to the last two volumes of the Proceedings of the Boston society of natural history. It is probable that a similar discrepancy between the pre-announced and the actual dates of issue occurs in the issue of the proceedings of many other societies, but in general there is no means of detecting the discrepancy. Even here it is not until two or three years after the issue of the first signatures before the true date of issue is made known. Meanwhile, what misunderstandings might arise, either controversially or privately, from the erroneous impression conveyed by the dates printed on the signatures! It will be noticed, in the lists given below, especially from volume 20 of the Proceedings, in how many cases the announcement is false, and how great, in many cases, is the discrepancy.

Dates of actual publication of the Proceedings of the Boston society of natural history, v. 20 and 21, as compared with the dates printed on the signatures.

Volume 20.

	Announced date,	Actual date of issue.	Discrepancy in days.
p. 1-32,	Dec. 1878	[1 Jan. 1879].	1
p. 33-48,	[22] Jan.	1879.	0
p. 49-80,	Jan.	[5 Feb.] 1879.	5
p. 81-09,	Feb.	[1 Mch.] 1879.	1
p. 97-112,	Mch.	[4 Apr.] 1879.	4
p. 113-128,	[4] Apr.	1879.	0
p. 129-144,	Apr.	[18 June] 1879.	49
p. 145-160,	May	[18 June] 1879.	18
p. 161-176,	July	[4 Aug.] 1879.	4
p. 177-192,	Sept.	[24 Oct.] 1879.	24
p. 193-208,	[20] Oct.	1879.	0
p. 200-221,	Oct.	[20 Nov.] 1879.	20

	Announced date.	Actual date of issue.	Discrepancy in days.
p. 225-272,	[20] Nov.		1879.
p. 273-288,	Dec.	1879 [5 Feb. 1880].	36
p. 289-304,	Feb.	1880 [17 Dec. 1879].	-40!
p. 305-320,	Jan.	[5 Feb.] 1880.	5
p. 321-352,	Mch.	[7 Apr.] 1880.	7
p. 353-368,	May	[20 Oct.] 1880.	142
p. 369-384,	Aug.	[23 Oct.] 1880.	59
p. 385-400,	Oct.	[3 Nov.] 1880.	3
p. 401-416,	Nov.	1880 [5 Jan. 1881].	39
p. 417-448,	May	[25 June] 1881.	25
p. 449-494,	June	[23 July] 1881.	23
p. 495-480,	[23] July	1881.	0
p. 481-495,	July	[5 Aug.] 1881.	5
p. 497-506,	Sept.	[5 Nov.] 1881.	39

Volume 21.

p. 1-10,	[23] July		1881.	0
p. 17-32,	July	[16 Aug.] 1881.	16	
p. 33-48,	[16] Aug.	1881.	0	
p. 49-80,	Aug.	[5 Nov.] 1881.	66	
p. 81-112,	Sept.	[5 Nov.] 1881.	36	
p. 113-128,	Oct.	[5 Nov.] 1881.	5	
p. 129-144,	[21] Nov.	1881.	0	
p. 145-160,	[28] Nov.	1881.	0	
p. 161-176,	[15] Dec.	1881.	0	
p. 177-208,	Dec.	1881 [7 Jan. 1882].	7	
p. 209-240,	[30] Jan.	1882.	0	
p. 241-256,	[7] Feb.	1882 [1882].	(?)	
p. 257-272,	Feb.	[1 Mch.] 1882.	4	
p. 273-288,	[10] Mch.	1882.	0	
p. 289-304,	[18] Apr.	1882.	0	
p. 305-320,	[10] May	1882.	0	
p. 321-336,	[27] May	1882.	0	
p. 337-352,	[15] June	1882.	0	
p. 353-368,	June	[6 July] 1882.	6	
p. 369-384,	[17] July	1882.	0	
p. 385-400,	[6] Sept.	1882.	0	
p. 401-416,	[12] Oct.	1882.	0	
p. 417-432,	Oct.	[3 Nov.] 1882.	3	
p. 433-448,	Jan.	[5 Feb.] 1883.	5	
p. 449-464,	[21] Feb.	1883.	0	
p. 465-475,	21 Mch.	1883.	0	

We commend it to the attention of the editors, not only of the periodicals mentioned, but also of others, whether it would not be well to adopt the principle illustrated in *PSYCHE*, of giving, at the earliest opportunity, in a systematic manner, the dates of issue of parts *already issued*, and omitting dates of prospective issue.

B: P. M.

PROCEEDINGS OF SOCIETIES.

ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES OF PHILADELPHIA.

8 AUG. 1882. — The Rev. H: C. McCook described the raids of *Formica sanguinea* upon *F. fusca* — raids in which the black slaves assist their red masters. Reds and blacks shared the labor of raising the young. The nests of *F. fusca*, conspicuous in places where there were no red ants, were hard to find where the latter were common. An attempt to introduce the red ant into a city yard failed through the attacks of the common pavement ant, *Tetramorium caespitum*.

3 OCT. 1882 — Dr. Skinner remarked that the organ of offence of the larva of *Papilio*, usually believed to be solid, is really hollow, rolled in and out upon itself.

10 OCT. 1882. — Rev. H: C. McCook presented a paper upon the snares of orb-weaving spiders, and described four species of *Epeira*.

31 OCT. 1882. — Rev. H: C. McCook drew attention to the use of ants as insecticides by the Chinese, and stated his belief that as no American species lived on trees, the probabilities were against their usefulness for a similar purpose.

7 NOV. 1882. — Rev. H: C. McCook presented a paper on "Ants as beneficial insecticides" and advocated the importation of the ant used in China for the protection of orange trees.

14 NOV. 1882. — Mr. Thomas Meehan stated that the nest of the wood pewee [*contopus virens*] is held together by cobwebs.

5 DEC. 1882. — Dr. Horn remarked upon the singular distribution of the apterous-water-beetle *Amphizoa*, one species of which inhabits California, a second the district northward of that state as far as Vancouver's island, while a third has been found high up in the mountains of Thibet.

23 JAN. 1883. — Dr. Skinner stated that *Argynnis cybele*, instead of carefully depositing its eggs, as is usual with butterflies, dropped them from a distance upon the herbage. — Compiled from *Amer. nat.*, April 1883, v. 17, p. 462-466.